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M. Ercoles (ed., comm., transl.), *Stesicoro. Le testimonianze antiche* (Eikasmos Studi 24; Bologna 2013).

This most welcome volume provides the fullest account of the testimonia to Stesichorus that these texts have ever received – indeed, it is hard to imagine them ever receiving a fuller one, or a better. Ercoles's book will be essential for anyone interested in Stesichorus or lyric poetry, in the ancient reception of Stesichorus' work, or in the traditions concerning poets' lives that developed throughout antiquity.

After a brief preface, the fifty-page introduction is divided into four sections: 'Stesicoro, cinquanta anni dopo', 'Per un profilo storico di Stesicoro', 'Tradizioni poetiche e innovazioni nella melica stesicorea', and 'Stesicoro oltre il suo tempo: fortuna e storia della tradizione'. There follow the testimonia themselves. First come the 'Testimonia ad vitam pertinentia', divided into seven sections: 'De etymo et forma nominis', 'De aetate', 'De patria', 'De patre', 'De fratribus', 'Biographica', 'Stesichori simulacra monumenta epitaphia', and 'Phalarida'. Then come the 'Testimonia ad artem pertinentia', subdivided into 'De Stesicoro poeta', 'De poematum generibus', 'De metris', 'De musica', 'De choro', 'De poetica dialecto', 'De usu poematum apud antiquos', 'Veterum iudicia', and 'Iniuria ad Stesichorum relata'. All of the testimonia are then translated into Italian. Next comes the heart of the book, the commentary, of almost four hundred pages.

The main text concludes on p. 616; a hundred and fifty further pages follow, containing an extensively documented bibliography (including a helpful chronological list of editions and translations), a 'Tabula comparationis', which cross-references E.'s numeration against that of fully four other editions, an 'Index verborum' (the first part in Greek, containing every Greek word cited apart from δέ,

the second in Latin), an 'Index fontium', an 'Index locorum', an 'Index notabilium' (itself divided into 'Anglica, Italica, Latina' and 'Graeca'), and finally the Contents.

Ercoles's knowledge of Stesichorus' poetry, of his life and times, and of the traditions surrounding him in later years, is second to none; it is awe-inspiring to see how much material he has assimilated, both in terms of ancient texts and modern bibliography, and how clearly he presents his findings. He sees scholarship as one whole, equally at home in discussing arguments from the sixteenth century as in dealing with more modern contributions; he is also familiar with the latest studies on the wide range of ancient and mediaeval authors who preserve Stesichorean testimonia. Occasionally a reader may think that the documentation is excessive; for example, do we need a citation of seven separate works on the song of the nightingale in ancient poetry, and six on the song of the swan (pp. 300-1 n. 367)? Perhaps not; on the other hand, the use of the Harvard system of citation means that such a depth of citation does not slow down the text very much, and this is after all designed to be a thorough study. And although this is a long book, that is not because Ercoles is long-winded; rather, the testimonia confront readers with multiple problems of text and interpretation, through which Ercoles is always a patient and rewarding guide.

The presentation of the texts is extremely clear. The source of each testimonium is given at the start, including where relevant its location in the best edition of the author from whom it is taken. Again, little escapes Ercoles's eye here; he has even hit upon Richard Janko's edition of Megaclicides (p. 62), squirreled away in the footnotes to one of the volumes of his monumental Philodemus edition. After the text comes a detailed apparatus criticus. Ercoles has specified the first modern editor, whether Neander in 1556, Davies in 1991, or someone in between, to identify each testimonium, allowing historians of scholarship to see which texts were mined

when, and how our picture of Stesichorus and his activity has been fleshed out over the centuries. Ercoles is alive to the evidence of art as well as of texts; so his testimonium Ta42, a piece of Cicero describing a statue of Stesichorus, is juxtaposed with a coin from Thermae Himerenses depicting that very artefact.

Some of Ercoles's testimonia have not been included in previous editions. He begins with several discussions of the etymology and morphology of Stesichorus' name. These are perhaps not strictly testimonia to the poet Stesichorus, since the name was used by others, but by including them Ercoles is able to begin his commentary on an onomastic note, teasing out the implications of the name 'Stesichorus' for the poet's life and career. Here and in his discussion of the name of Stesichorus' father he makes good use of the *Lexicon of Greek Personal Names*, a magnificent resource still under-appreciated (or so it seems to me) by many literary scholars. Ercoles also includes those letters ascribed to Phalaris that concern Stesichorus. As he notes (p. 414), these letters were included in Ursinus's edition of the fragments published in 1568, but after Bentley had demonstrated that they were not the work of the sixth-century tyrant of Acragas, Stesichorean scholars became less interested in them, and eventually banished them from editions of the testimonia altogether. But although these letters do not go back to the archaic period, they nevertheless do come from antiquity, and are worth consideration in their own right by scholars interested in the biographical legends that developed around Stesichorus. It is a great boon to have these letters here, accompanied as they are by Ercoles's detailed commentary which, among other things, gives a full discussion of their textual tradition.

The extensive bibliography and painstaking indexes greatly increase the value of the book; if only all authors were so careful. Ercoles has done his readers an immense service by making his work so accessible.

The two previous collections of Stesichorus' testimonia were both published in 1991: by M. Davies in his *Poetarum Melicorum Graecorum Fragmenta* volume 1 (Oxford), and by D. A. Campbell in the Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA and London), the latter with an English translation. But Ercoles's lavish edition supersedes both of these works, and should henceforth be the first place to which scholars and students turn when needing to consult these texts. The book, originally a dissertation undertaken at the University of Bologna, is itself a testimony to the high standard of philological expertise cultivated at that institution; the publishers too deserve credit for producing such an attractive volume at a price well below what would be charged by a British press for a comparable work.

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